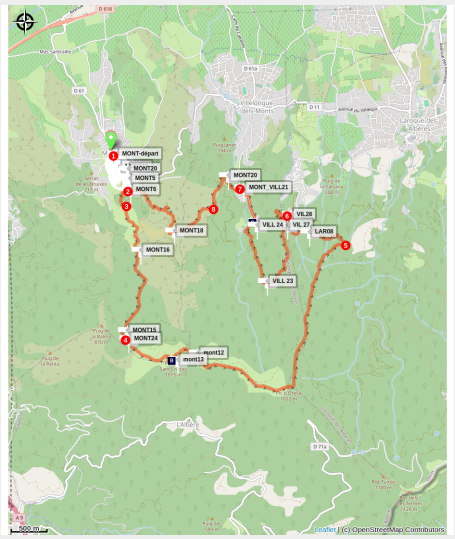
"The paths of freedom in "Les Albères"

Albères



(Frédéric Hédelin)



Explore the paths of exile taken during the Second World War and the Retirada. The viewpoints are breathtaking, with a Romanesque priory and vernacular heritage adding to the richness of this hike.

Starting from Montesquieu towards Pic Sant Cristau (1015m), then crossing the ridges to Pic d'Orella. Descend towards Villelongue dels Monts passing by the priory of Santa Maria del Vilar, then return to Montesquieu. This challenging hike with sublime viewpoints puts you in the footsteps of the exiles fleeing occupied France during World War II. Conversely, these paths were also those taken by Spanish exiles following the capture of Barcelona by General Franco. It was known as "La Retirada.

Useful information

Practice : Hiking

Duration : 8 h 12

Length : 17.6 km

Trek ascent : 1376 m

Difficulty : Very hard

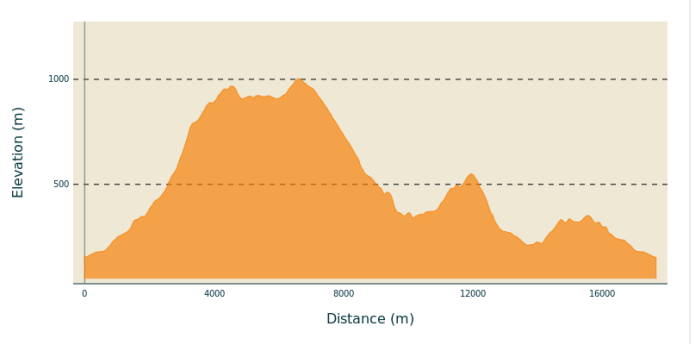
Type : Boucle

Themes : Flora, Point de vue, Géologie, Sommet, Refuge, Histoire, Montagne

Trek

Departure : City hall of Villelongue dels Monts
Arrival : City hall of Villelongue dels Monts
Markings : PR
Cities : 1. MONTESQUIEU DES ALBERES
2. VILLELONGUE DELS MONTS
3. LAROQUE DES ALBERES

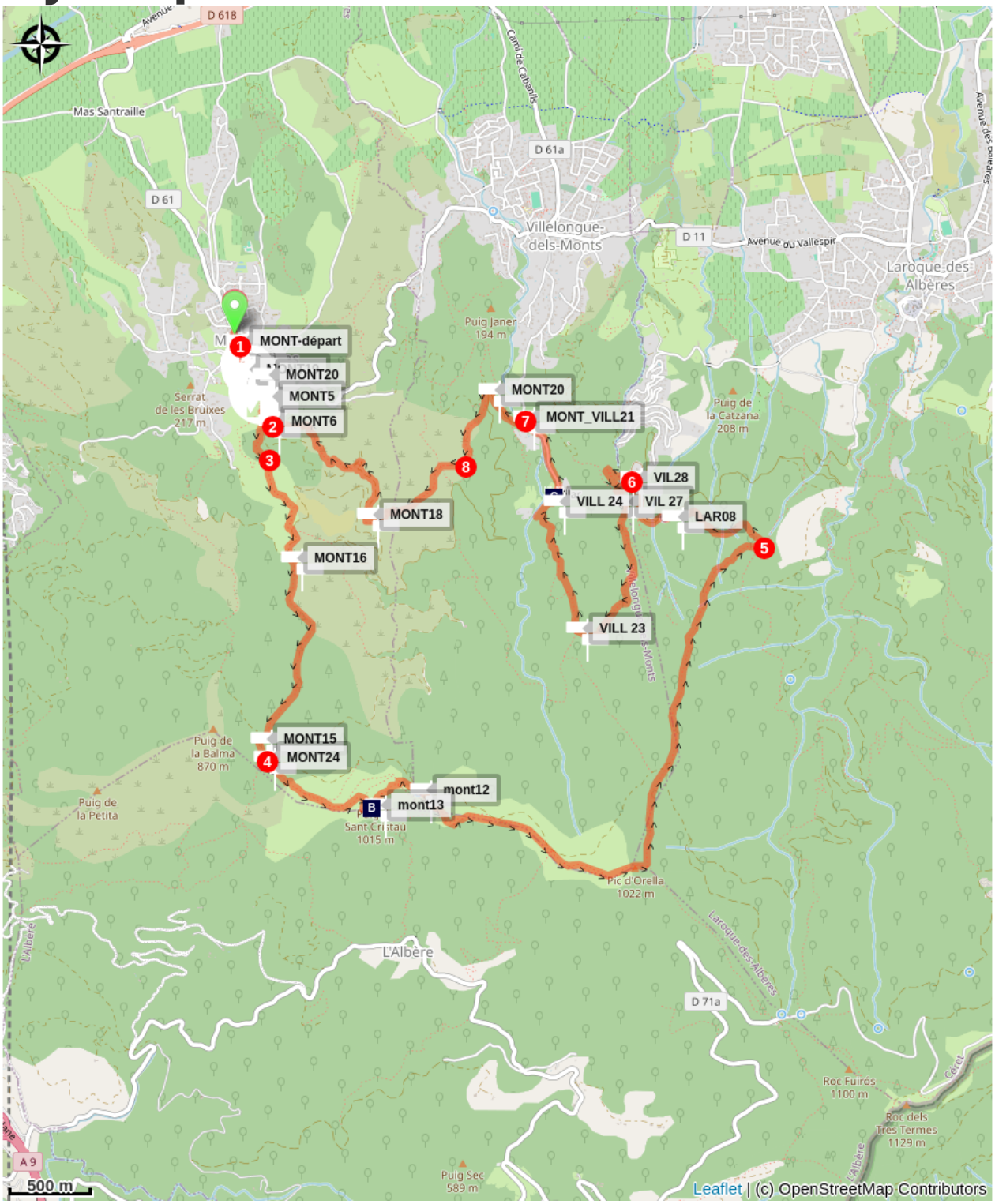
Altimetric profile



Min elevation 151 m Max elevation 1003 m

1. Depart from the town hall, climb up Grand Rue, turn left, and then take Chemin Saint-Christophe on the left.
2. Ignore the path on the left and continue straight.
3. Do not take the right path, continue straight to Col de Llinas.
4. Head towards Pic Sant Cristau, then towards Font de Sant Cristau. Follow the direction towards Pic d'Orella and Roc Grévol.
5. Turn left towards Font dels Simiots.
6. Follow the markings for "Prieuré Santa Maria del Vilar."
7. At the dirt parking area, take the dirt path and follow it to Montesquieu.
8. Descend to the right on the botanical trail, then at point 2, return in the opposite direction.

On your path...



Castle of Montesquieu (A)
Priory Santa Maria del Vilar (C)

Puig Sant Cristau (B)

All useful information

⚠ Advices

Ensure proper hydration and pack a picnic, wear hiking shoes, bring a windbreaker, a cap or hat, and sunscreen. Check the weather and fire risks before departure. Respect nature and carry your trash. This hike is suitable for experienced hikers.

How to come ?

Transports

Bus 2€

Access

D618, D61

Advised parking

The city hall car park

On your path...



Castle of Montesquieu (A)

Feudal castle built by the lords of Sant Cristau, who then took the name of Montesquieu, dates back to 1080. The central dungeon houses the former home of the lord which was later backed a vaulted room which was the subject of a restoration. The enclosure wall to protect the whole measures nearly 12 meters high. A breathtaking view awaits you!

Attribution : Mairie Montesquieu-des-Albères



Puig Sant Cristau (B)

At an altitude of 1015 meters above sea level, Puig Sant-Cristau is no exception for hikers from the plains. Important theater of the decisive battles of the War of Roussillon (1794), its ways are still marked by history. You find at the top a chapel which dominates at 360 ° the Plaine du Roussillon, the Massif du Canigou and the Mediterranean Sea. Do not miss this impressive landscape!

Attribution : admin66pm



Priory Santa Maria del Vilar (C)

Nestled in the heart of Albères, priory Santa Maria del Vilar crosses the ages. Founded in 1083, monks transformed the building from the Carolingian era into a hospitable pilgrim for Compostela and added a church. In 1802, the place changes completely function since it is sold to a farmer who transforms the church into a stable. Abandoned in 1942, it disappears gradually under the vegetation but has now been restored and hosts opera concerts.

Attribution : CCACVI